

THE ADVOCATE.

PHILADELPHIA EDITORS.

NEWSPAPER CHIEFTAINS KNOWN
THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

Colonel Clayton McMichael's Record as a Journalist and Man of Affairs—Colonel McClure's Physical Vigor and Literary Force—Versatile John Russell Young.

If a Philadelphian were asked to point out three of the brightest lights in the journalistic profession in the Quaker City he would at once name Colonel Clayton McMichael, Colonel Alexander K. McClure and John Russell Young. There are half a dozen others who are well known abroad and at home, but the three mentioned constitute a group of original, dashing and brilliant thinkers.



COLONEL CLAYTON MCMICHAEL.

Their fame is not bounded by any city or state lines. All three are entertaining talkers and—without any discredit to their oratorical powers—still better writers. Each in his turn has enjoyed the confidence and friendship, and, in at least two cases, the affection of a president of the United States.

Colonel Clayton McMichael, the editor and proprietor of The North American, was once described as "the youngest editor of the oldest daily." That was some years ago—not so many either. He is still in the prime of a vigorous manhood, but the silver threads are beginning to appear here and there. Colonel McMichael is a "working" journalist in the fullest sense of that frequently misused term. He generally reaches The North American office about 2 o'clock in the afternoon. It is not until the state house bell has tolled the hour of 2 in the morning that he finally leaves his sanctum. He has two "dens." One is on the first floor, in the rear of the business office. He generally receives visitors there during the afternoon. The other is in the sky parlor of the building, where he does his writing in the evening.

Colonel McMichael is a man of pleasing address. A stranger is at once struck with his ease and grace and gentlemanly manner. He talks sincerely and vigorously, and has an emphatic style of expressing himself that can leave no doubt as to what he means to say. He has what are sometimes called "speaking eyes." When his gaze first rests upon you it seems to penetrate through and through, but just about the time you are considering the advisability of retreating the eyes light up with a kindly and reassuring glance and you feel that you are at home and with a friend.

The last time ex-President Cleveland visited Philadelphia some one mentioned the name of McMichael. Instantly the ex-president exclaimed: "Tell Colonel McMichael I was asking for him. Don't forget to convey to him my very best regards." Thereby hangs a tale. Every one acquainted with life at the national capital remembers Colonel McMichael's reign as marshal of the District of Columbia. President Arthur, who has himself been aptly described as "the first gentleman of his time," when he selected Colonel McMichael for the post, selected a congenial gentleman who was also his warm personal friend. The position of marshal of the district at that time was raised to a plane that it had never reached before and that it has never attained since. When Mr. Cleveland assumed the presidency he found Colonel McMichael's resignation on his desk. He refused to accept it and asked as a favor that the marshal serve out the remainder of his term—a matter of a few



COLONEL ALEXANDER K. MCCLURE.

months. At the end of that time the president was so well pleased with the manner in which the place was filled that he urged the colonel to remain, but in vain. Since that time, however, the kindest feeling has existed between the two gentlemen.

Colonel McMichael lives in elegant style on West Walnut street. He is fond of social life and enjoys the theater. He has had a military career that any man might be proud of. He was twice wounded in battle. He is a fluent after dinner talker, and as a writer his productions are noted for their ease, grace



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HIS BOOKS WERE POPULAR.

The Great Vogue Enjoyed by the Late James Parton.

James Parton was beyond question the most popular historian of his time with the great middle class. At least 10,000,000 adult Americans never think of laboring through Bancroft and rarely look at Hildreth, yet want something far better than school histories and semiromantic sketches of their great men, such as the



JAMES PARTON.

Weems biographies, for instance. For all such Parton was the ideal writer. He wrote for the middle million, and he did it well. An Englishman by birth, he was as intensely American as any native; an unbeliever in revealed religion, he charmed the most orthodox, and while his views on such exciting subjects as slavery, war and the tariff were extreme even to the verge of fanaticism, he wrote biographies of Aaron Burr, Horace Greeley and Andrew Jackson that charmed men of all parties, destroyed half the old federalist prejudice against Thomas Jefferson, and almost interested southerners in Ben Butler as a gentleman and philanthropist. What is equally remarkable, he violated some of the strongest social rules without losing caste, and wrote a eulogistic life of Voltaire without exciting the wrath of religious editors. The charm of his style and the evident sincerity in his expression account for it.

He was born in Canterbury, England, Feb. 9, 1823, and at the age of five was taken by his widowed mother to New York, got his education there and at White Plains, and then passed a year in the Old World, expending in the tour a small legacy he had received in England. He taught school awhile in Philadelphia and New York, and while in the latter city wrote an analysis of the famous "Jane Eyre," demonstrating that it was the work of a woman. This essay he sent to The Home Journal, with many misgivings. To his supreme delight, as he tells us, it appeared in the next number of that paper, with editorial approval by N. P. Willis; he sought the latter's acquaintance and resolved to devote his life to literature.

His salary on The Home Journal was ten dollars per week for a long time, nor did he make any great success till he issued the "Life of Horace Greeley" in 1855. Thirty-five thousand copies were sold in the first "boom," and the work is still in some demand. In 1857 he issued the "Life and Times of Aaron Burr," in 1860 the "Life of Andrew Jackson," "Ben Butler in New Orleans" in 1868, and the "Life of Benjamin Franklin." Many minor works followed, and in 1873 his "Life of Thomas Jefferson" produced quite a sensation.

In 1881 he published his favorite, the book to which he had devoted all his leisure hours since boyhood, "The Life of Voltaire." This work was his labor of love. Voltaire was his hero. He had studied that author's works as no other American ever did. Critics esteem it his best work, but the general public has not yet taken hold of it as of his biographies of eminent Americans.

In 1856 Mr. Parton married the lady whose pen name was Fanny Fern—Sara Payson Willis, sister of N. P. Willis and widow of Charles S. Eldridge, of Boston. In 1872 she died, and a year or two later he married her daughter and his own stepdaughter, Miss Ellen W. Eldridge. Of course there was a "discussion." Discovering that the marriage in Massachusetts was illegal they removed to New York and had the ceremony performed again. On their return to Massachusetts there was a "complication." The legislature passed a law legalizing the marriage, but Governor Rice vetoed it. The New York marriage, however, was valid in both states. His second union was much happier than his first, and his children by that union are a boy and a girl, of fourteen and twelve years, respectively. He lived in Newburyport, Mass., after 1872 and was an active and valued citizen.

Published Atlanta's First Daily.

Mr. Timothy Burke, one of the publishers of the first daily paper in Atlanta, has recently died in that city of old age. He was born in County Clare, Ireland,

in 1807, as is believed, and removed to America in 1835. After working in New York as a shoe-maker he and a fellow countryman named Michael Lynch made a tour of the south, finally locating in Atlanta, where they remained friends till parted by death. Mr. Burke lived for a short time in Newman, Ga. In 1850 he and his partner opened the first general bookstore in Atlanta.



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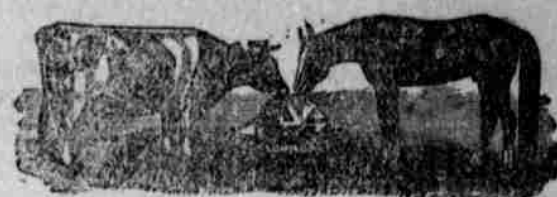
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